


Navigating futures: Theoretical perspectives on university students' employability perceptions and entrepreneurial aspirations

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Abstract: This study explores the intricate bond between students' views on their employment readiness and their entrepreneurial goals. A qualitative literature review methodology was used to analyze current research, which provides a comprehensive understanding of student perceptions regarding their market readiness and entrepreneurial ambitions. The literature review methodology was chosen because it allows for the integration of extensive qualitative and quantitative data with theoretical findings from various studies. The conceptual framework established through this research enables a robust interpretation of how students perceive their employability and develop entrepreneurial intentions. The research data was retrieved from scholarly databases including JSTOR, Google Scholar, Scopus, and SpringerLink to include relevant high-quality research articles. This article pursues three primary objectives: i) a theoretical examination of university students' employability perceptions, ii) an analysis of factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions, and iii) an evaluation of how higher education affects employability and entrepreneurial mindset development. The study addresses the current knowledge gap regarding university students' understanding of their employability in relation to entrepreneurship during a period of technological change and economic instability in the job market. The research results offer an advanced understanding of how students' internal confidence levels and academic and environmental economic factors either support or challenge their ability to enter the workforce and pursue entrepreneurship. The research combines theoretical approaches to these constructs, providing essential knowledge for universities to develop curricula that enhance both employability and entrepreneurial skills. The study contributes to the ongoing discussion about university strategies to prepare students for future challenges in complex modern labor markets.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial aspirations, Higher education, Theoretical perspectives, University, Employability.*

1. Introduction

Young adults who are university students and recent graduates encounter major obstacles while transitioning from educational environments to professional careers in modern global society. Youth unemployment rates remain at critical levels worldwide due to economic instability and labour market transformation, according to the World Bank. The transition from education to employment faces distinct challenges that developing economies must overcome, but no region experiences these obstacles alone [1]. Several African nations face similar global economic challenges, which result in elevated youth unemployment rates that block African economic development and stability. The obstacles that university graduates face in securing employment are most significant in the African context. Many African youth remain unemployed despite having higher education qualifications because the economic environment maintains challenging conditions [2]. Entrepreneurial ambitions remain underdeveloped within this environment, even though experts increasingly recognize entrepreneurship as an effective solution to combat unemployment [3]. The existing conditions require immediate attention to effective

entrepreneurial education and skill development programs, which will enable graduates to succeed in competitive labour markets and create employment opportunities [4].

The youth unemployment emergency in South Africa drives the government to promote entrepreneurship as an employment solution [3]. The encouragement from the government does not translate into sufficient personal drive from South African graduates to launch businesses, which leads to an unexpected situation where unemployed candidates encounter strong market competition alongside declining entrepreneurial drive [5]. The South African business environment requires both better entrepreneurial programs and strong employability education that match job market requirements.

Research indicates that employability and entrepreneurship form an essential relationship because individuals who feel they can find employment show stronger intentions to start their own businesses, especially during times of economic struggle [2]. The connection between these concepts matters because individuals who feel employable tend to pursue entrepreneurship to secure their position in the job market.

Previous research analysed entrepreneurial intentions and employability separately, yet there is limited evidence about their connection among university students. This research aims to address the existing knowledge gap through its analysis of university of technology student perceptions regarding their employability skills, labour market expectations, and their entrepreneurial goals. It further investigates related perceptions to deliver important empirical findings that will guide employment strategy development, entrepreneurial education programs, and skill-building initiatives.

The research will expand knowledge about how students at universities in South Africa experience their professional future while dealing with workforce complexities to develop specific interventions for improving both their employability and entrepreneurial goals.

2. Methodology

The research employed qualitative methods through literature review to investigate theoretical aspects of university students' employment readiness and entrepreneurial ambitions. The literature review genre was chosen because it enables the synthesis of diverse scholarly works alongside critical analysis and integration of findings to understand complex evolving concepts [6]. The qualitative literature review method provides optimal results for studying theoretical foundations and emerging career patterns of students since it reveals patterns across multiple contexts [7]. The study required a literature review methodology to gather and analyse existing theories and frameworks and empirical findings about university students' employability perceptions and entrepreneurial aspirations. The systematic review of previous research through this approach leads to better conceptual understanding and theoretical advancement [6]. The research methodology provides both transparency and reproducibility throughout the process and enables quick identification of established and disputed ideas in existing literature [7].

2.1. Data Collection Process

The data collection process started with a systematic database search across multiple scholarly sources to achieve both breadth and quality of sources. The research used JSTOR alongside Google Scholar, Scopus, and SpringerLink as its database sources. The research strategy combined Boolean operators with specific keywords, including "university students," "employability perceptions," "entrepreneurial aspirations," and "theoretical perspectives." The research focused on peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and high-quality reviews published in English from the last two decades to maintain both relevance and contemporary significance. Articles were selected based on their thematic relevance, theoretical significance, methodological quality, and temporal scope to ensure both rigor and relevance.

2.2. Thematic Identification

The research team applied inductive content analysis procedures [8] to identify themes through multiple iterations. The researchers first applied coding to identify fundamental concepts, theoretical frameworks, and patterns in the research findings. The research team combined similar codes into more general thematic categories after conducting code clustering and comparison. The analysis focused on both the unified and different viewpoints that appeared in the literature. The thematic synthesis revealed key theoretical directions and new emerging patterns that influence students' employability and entrepreneurial orientations.

3. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

3.1. Key Theoretical Perspectives on Employability Perceptions

Theoretical frameworks, including Duggal, et al. [9] and Tymon [10] explain how university students form their views about their employability, which means their ability to find and sustain employment. Employability exists as an advanced, multifaceted concept that depends on personal characteristics, together with educational credentials and labour market conditions [11, 12]. The study focuses on self-perceived employability because it examines students' individual assessments of their abilities relative to workforce needs [9].

Research by Van den Broeck, et al. [13] shows that employability perceptions are not solely individualistic because university and organizational environments, through mechanisms such as perceived organizational support and value alignment, play a critical role in shaping students' confidence in their career prospects. Students who experience their university as supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness according to self-determination theory (SDT) demonstrate higher self-perceived employability, and better career trajectory navigation Van den Broeck, et al. [13]. Tymon [10] demonstrates that students develop their own employability understanding, which diverges from institutional definitions by focusing on complete development, personal control, and continuous learning. Career development models stress the need to develop adaptability skills while building a proactive, protean career orientation according to [12].

3.2. Theories of Entrepreneurial Intention

The literature has extensively explored university student entrepreneurial intentions through the application of Ajzen [14]. Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Shapero's Model of the Entrepreneurial Event (SEE) as fundamental theoretical frameworks [15-17]. According to Ajzen [14]. TPB, entrepreneurial intentions result from three elements, which include attitudes toward the behaviour along with subjective norms and perceived behavioural control [18]. Empirical research indicates that perceived behavioural control, which represents an individual's belief in their ability to execute entrepreneurial tasks, strongly influences their entrepreneurial intentions [19]. The construct demonstrates strong similarity with employability since both concepts rely on self-efficacy and personal beliefs regarding handling uncertainty [20].

The SEE model developed by Shapero demonstrates that entrepreneurial intentions emerge from three elements: perceived desirability (business start-up appeal), perceived feasibility (self-assessment of capability), and opportunity action propensity [15, 17]. Critical incidents known as "displacing events" push people toward entrepreneurial paths, particularly when they interrupt their current career paths [21]. The process of entrepreneurship education acts as a mediator to develop entrepreneurial intentions through its impact on entrepreneurial capacity, self-efficacy, and opportunity recognition [22, 23].

4. Integrating Employability and Entrepreneurial Aspirations

The distinction between employability perceptions and entrepreneurial aspirations has become less clear because researchers now understand how these concepts interact [16, 24]. Students who

demonstrate strong employability self-perception often consider entrepreneurship as a natural progression from traditional employment because they share similar abilities such as adaptability, self-directed learning, and proactivity [12, 25]. The TPB and SEE models establish effective tools to analyse the relationship between these factors. The models demonstrate that perceived behavioural control or feasibility plays a crucial role in both employability and entrepreneurial pursuits because it reflects the confidence needed for these activities [17, 18]. According to Seibert, et al. [21] destabilizing events such as economic uncertainty and limited job opportunities force students to re-evaluate their career choices, which leads them to develop entrepreneurial identities to secure future labour market access.

Entrepreneurship education, along with entrepreneurial capacity development, now functions as a dual-purpose program that both trains students for business creation and enhances their employability prospects [22]. Educational interventions that teach resilience, together with opportunity recognition and innovation capabilities, enable students to explore more career possibilities while developing skills for working in a changing employment landscape.

The essential theoretical frameworks show that employability perceptions and entrepreneurial intentions create a positive feedback loop between them. University students today understand that employability and entrepreneurship exist as interconnected career strategies that help them manage the changing nature of modern labour markets.

5. Analysis of Employability Perceptions

Higher education research now prioritizes university students' self-assessment of their employability because universities face growing pressure to prepare graduates for modern labour market changes. The current research examines student evaluations of their employability and the various elements that shape these assessments, with emphasis on skills, competencies, and self-efficacy. The belief students have about their ability to secure and sustain appropriate employment after graduation defines their perceived employability [9]. Research shows that these perceptions remain dynamic and do not create uniformity among student groups. The study by Bennett, et al. [26] reveals that students' beliefs about employability differ between genders and study years, which indicates that both social identity and university experience influence students' professional confidence. Rätty, et al. [5] show that students' "ability selves," which represent their self-perceived skills, play an essential role in forming their employability assessments.

According to Ma and Bennett [27] students' perceptions of their employability develop through their academic involvement and their state of personal wellness. Students who experience high stress levels together with low academic participation tend to lose their confidence in employability, yet students who plan their careers proactively and achieve positive academic results tend to strengthen their beliefs.

5.1. Influences on Employability Perceptions

Research indicates that employability perceptions develop through the combination of personal factors and environmental conditions. The research by Ergün and Şeşen [28] reveals that individual work history, alongside career optimism and self-efficacy, play major roles in determining employability. Self-efficacy emerges as the most important factor that shapes individual perceptions of employability because it measures their ability to execute tasks and achieve goals. Students who demonstrate adaptability along with resourcefulness and learning capabilities tend to have stronger employability perceptions according to Álvarez-González, et al. [29] and Duggal, et al. [9]. Three essential contextual elements, which include curriculum design, university support, and teaching staff engagement, determine the development of employability perceptions. Petruzzello, et al. [30] show that faculty members develop robust employability perceptions in students by providing mentorship and feedback and by delivering real-world challenges. The research conducted by Ho, et al. [31] shows that specific career development learning programs enhance student employability through better career

management skills and increased labour market understanding. Longxiang, et al. [32] describe how employability beliefs form through the combination of soft skills with hard skills, which encompass communication abilities and teamwork skills, and digital literacy and discipline-specific expertise. According to Cheng, et al. [11] universities, along with students and employers, need to collaborate for employability development while ensuring educational programs match contemporary industry demands.

5.2. *The Role of Competencies and Skills*

Students' employability perceptions also rely heavily on their acquisition of technical and transferable competencies according to Álvarez-González, et al. [29] and Sin, et al. [33]. Students identify communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability as their most important workforce competencies [32]. Students' self-assessment of their skills does not match employer expectations, which demonstrates the requirement for authentic work-integrated learning and reflective practice in higher education curricula [10, 11].

5.3. *Self-Efficacy and Responsible Agency*

Self-efficacy acts as a fundamental factor that affects students' perceived employability while simultaneously determining their motivation to pursue and accept available opportunities [9, 28]. The research by Sin, et al. [33] shows students take ownership of employability development, yet they believe universities should enable skill development through professional opportunities.

The conceptual framework of Van den Broeck, et al. [13] demonstrates that students develop stronger employability beliefs when they experience supportive learning environments that meet their psychological needs for autonomy and competence. The relationship between students' internal resources and educational context quality determines how they perceive employability. The current literature demonstrates that university students' employability perceptions consist of multiple elements that depend on specific contexts and include various skills, competencies, and self-efficacy beliefs. A complete strategy that combines educational innovation with supportive teaching methods and career development initiatives will create positive employability beliefs among students who face various and uncertain career paths.

6. **Factors Influencing Entrepreneurial Intentions To Start A Business**

Entrepreneurial intention (EI) describes the motivation behind starting a new business venture and serves as an essential foundation for entrepreneurial behaviour [34, 35]. The identification of factors that affect EI stands as crucial for building initiatives to boost students' perceptions of employability and entrepreneurial aspirations in educational environments. The review shows important elements identified from the literature: gender and age, self-efficacy, social and family environment, and entrepreneurial education.

6.1. *Gender and Age*

Current research demonstrates how gender and age create an intricate link with entrepreneurial intentions. Studies by Hendieh, et al. [35] demonstrate male students exhibit stronger entrepreneurial intentions than their female counterparts, yet Torres, et al. [36] found no meaningful gender differences in this domain. According to Maheshwari [37] entrepreneurship intentions decrease with age because older people avoid risk-based opportunities. The research conducted by Chang, et al. [25] shows that age and entrepreneurship follow an inverted U-shaped pattern where EI peaks at age thirty and then declines. According to Hamdani, et al. [38] both gender stereotypes and perceived social support directly affect women's self-efficacy and their subsequent EIs, which reveals how gender influences entrepreneurial settings. The discussion benefits from Adelowo and Akinwale [39] who demonstrate that university student EI differences stem from educational history combined with self-efficacy rather than natural gender differences. Raudeliūnienė and Matar [40] demonstrate through

their research that social encouragement functions as a mediating factor between innovativeness and women's entrepreneurial intentions. Xanthopoulou, et al. [41] explain how family dynamics, together with social environments, determine these gender-based discrepancies.

6.2. *Self-Efficacy*

Self-efficacy (SE) functions as the essential factor that determines EI. The study by Arnoud, et al. [42] shows a direct positive relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention while establishing that self-efficacy creates a basis for both employability and entrepreneurial intentions [43]. According to Wujema, et al. [44] self-efficacy functions as the belief system that helps people execute tasks effectively. Self-efficacy increases the motivation of people to start entrepreneurial activities. Research shows that students who gain higher self-efficacy learn better ways to tackle challenges and create successful plans for their ambitious entrepreneurial goals [34]. The study by Chinaire, et al. [45] confirms the link between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions through empirical evidence, which supports the importance of self-belief for future entrepreneurs.

6.3. *Social and Family Environment*

Social and familial surroundings greatly affect the entrepreneurial plans that people make. Entrepreneurial aspirations develop fundamentally through parental guidance and family relationships and the socioeconomic environment of childhood upbringing [46]. Children of business owners receive important social capital along with increased confidence to pursue entrepreneurship from their parents [47]. Through this exposure, students gain access to an abundant learning environment that allows them to develop entrepreneurial competencies and develop positive attitudes toward self-employment [34].

6.4. *Entrepreneurial Education*

Higher learning institutions maintain essential responsibilities in the development of entrepreneurial ambitions. People who receive formal entrepreneurial education demonstrate higher probabilities of launching their own businesses instead of those who do not have such training. University graduates show higher entrepreneurial tendencies according to Hunady, et al. [48] because they gain enhanced business success from their higher education. Specialized entrepreneurship programs demonstrate the ability to boost entrepreneurial behaviours while general education does not inherently lead to entrepreneurship [34]. The growing competitive nature of the economy makes it essential for universities to develop programs that build entrepreneurial culture and provide students with the support needed to succeed [49].

The dynamic interplay of gender together with age, self-efficacy, and social and family environments and entrepreneurial education creates a complex environment that shapes students' entrepreneurial intentions. Educational institutions must understand and implement these factors because they determine the entrepreneurial capacities along with the employability outcomes of their student body. The conceptual frameworks have provided essential theoretical foundations to create strategies that stimulate entrepreneurial ambitions within university student populations.

7. **Economic and Social Context of Higher Education**

The landscape of higher education is intricately entwined with the economic and social dynamics of the regions in which it operates. This section explores the multifaceted challenges that graduates face, particularly in developing economies, and underscores the critical role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in cultivating an environment conducive to employability and entrepreneurial aspirations.

7.1. *Economic Challenges Facing Graduates*

Many developing countries experience ongoing economic instability because structural barriers stop their economies from expanding and job opportunities from emerging. According to Ijeoma and Ndedi

[50] this economic instability causes significant changes in job availability, making the students and graduates rethink their professional goals. Economic uncertainty, together with declining employment opportunities, pushes graduates toward multiple career choices, including business start-up ventures. In South Africa, young graduates face extensive unemployment, which drives them toward entrepreneurial ventures and self-employment [51]. Furthermore, the economic effects of poorly designed educational curricula enhance student transition difficulties. In this regard, Ncube and Lekhanya [52] note that students benefit from innovative curricula that match workplace requirements and graduates who should be adaptable professionals, ready for an unpredictable job market. In this case, the crucial part HEIs play in addressing skills deficiencies and employer demands becomes apparent and essential.

7.2. Bridging the Gap: Employability Skills and Entrepreneurship Education

Higher education institutions need to direct their focus toward two essential aspects, which include employability skills and entrepreneurship education, because of economic challenges. The necessity for these educational reforms becomes clear when Brahmanekar, et al. [53] explain how HEIs must join forces with private industry to teach students entrepreneurial abilities. Educational institutions should develop a complete entrepreneurial education system because it improves student entrepreneurship aspirations while teaching employment-ready competencies. Research findings show that combined approaches to curriculum planning lead to significant improvements in graduate employability results [11]. Students develop practical skills by participating in internships and project-based learning activities that establish meaningful connections between theoretical knowledge and real-world applications, which enhances their skill development. The development of critical thinking alongside problem-solving and risk assessment through entrepreneurial education produces significant effects on student career development and employment preparedness [54].

7.3. Government and Institutional Support

The educational environment receives its fundamental direction from government policy. Higher education systems need effective governmental frameworks together with initiatives that promote entrepreneurship education. According to Santos-Jaén, et al. [55] government policies that create incentives for HEI-private enterprise partnerships lead to the establishment of strong entrepreneurial education programs. These initiatives build supportive networks between education and employment systems in developing countries. It is therefore essential that students' entrepreneurial intentions receive substantial improvement through effective support systems that institutions should establish. In this regard, HEIs should create mentorship programs together with funding opportunities and innovation hubs to enhance entrepreneurial thinking among students through their institutions. According to Zotov, et al. [56] these structures allow students to improve their business capabilities as well as their entrepreneurial confidence.

There is also a need for the economic and social environment of higher education to address graduate unemployment alongside underemployment problems, mainly within developing countries. Higher education institutions can fulfil their mission to develop employability skills while supporting entrepreneurial aspirations through proper policies and active institutional collaboration with forward-thinking curriculum designs. Graduates who receive education that aligns with labour market needs will develop resilience to handle career complexities, which leads to positive economic growth and social development.

8. Summary of Research Findings from the Literature

Using a literature review methodology, this study was structured to establish the connections between employability perceptions of university students and their entrepreneurial intentions and goals. From the explored literature, four major themes emerged. These themes are now summarised in the ensuing paragraphs.

8.1. Theme 1: University Students' Employability Perceptions

The literature indicated that Employability exists as a multifaceted construct that includes skills, qualifications, and attitudes, together with work readiness. The research of Donald, et al. [57] together with other studies, demonstrated how student perceptions about their employment prospects directly affect their entrepreneurial dreams. Understanding these components helps clarify the pathways through which students may perceive themselves as candidates for both employment and entrepreneurship. It was also established that Employability perceptions result from multiple factors, which include academic results and educational standards, as well as current economic trends. Knezović [43] along with Atitsogbe, et al. [2] discovered that favourable economic conditions increase student perceptions of employability, which leads to stronger entrepreneurial ambitions. The formative influence of supportive career counselling, together with mentorship programs, significantly affects these perceptions. Employability perceptions, thus, vary greatly among students because of academic discipline and demographic characteristics, along with socio-economic status. The socio-economic status plays a substantial role in shaping these perceptions. According to Santos-Jaén, et al. [55] gender, too, influences students' entrepreneurial aspirations and perceptions in significant ways. The authors noted that those male students exhibit stronger entrepreneurial ambitions than their female counterparts. The findings show that these variables require thorough investigation to understand their interconnected effects on employability and entrepreneurship outcomes.

8.2. Theme 2: Entrepreneurial Intentions

The exploration of literature regarding entrepreneurial intentions showed that self-assessed employability and entrepreneurial ambitions are linked. According to Saoula, et al. [58] the relationship between higher employability perceptions and stronger entrepreneurial intentions becomes more pronounced in times of economic difficulty. A sub-theme under the motivating factors section in theme 2 showed that students choose to become entrepreneurs because they want to achieve personal goals and identify employment market deficiencies. Entrepreneurship courses studied by Letsoalo and Rankhumise [59] prove that these courses boost students' entrepreneurial aspirations after graduation. This creates direct links between education and entrepreneurial results. The second theme was also characterized by "barriers to entrepreneurial aspirations" as its sub-theme. It was revealed that Students face numerous obstacles that prevent them from following their entrepreneurial dreams. Such impediments entailed among others unstable economies and cultural restrictions that discourage risk-taking. The study of Okoro, et al. [51] demonstrated how insufficient resources together with weak institutional support in African educational systems also prevented students from following entrepreneurial paths.

8.3. Theme 3: The Link Between Employability and Entrepreneurship

The existing theoretical frameworks which connect employability with entrepreneurship provided useful knowledge for understanding student opinions. According to Jain and Singla [60] the Theory of Planned Behaviour explains how students' employability perceptions influence their entrepreneurial intentions. Employability perceptions and entrepreneurial aspirations or intentions have a dynamic reciprocal relationship between them. Xanthopoulou and Sahinidis [61] in their work, suggest that entrepreneurs who maintain strong intentions develop better self-perceived employability which generates continuous aspiration and achievement cycles. This bidirectional correlation underscores the necessity of harnessing both aspects in educational settings.

8.4. Theme 4: Economic and Social Context of Higher Education

Under theme 4, sub-theme 1, "global economic challenges", addressed the wider economic hurdles faced by graduates, stressing specific issues experienced in emerging economies. As noted by Ijeoma and Ndedi [50] economic uncertainty does not only influence job availability but also affects students' aspirations to engage in entrepreneurial initiatives. As captured in sub-theme 2 of this theme, the

literature confirmed that Higher education institutions have the ability to address labour market needs by re-examining their curricula to develop employability skills as well as entrepreneurship abilities. According to Ncube and Lekhanya [52] a forward-thinking curriculum enables students to become prepared for labour market changes. Further literature analysis revealed the need for Government and Institutional Support. This sub-theme demonstrated the importance of government policies and public-private sector collaboration for advancing entrepreneurship education [53]. Additionally, it also revealed that a well-structured support framework would boost student entrepreneurial aspirations while reducing the employability and gap.

The foregoing themes and subthemes regarding university students' employability perceptions and entrepreneurial aspirations demonstrate essential links between these constructs. Educational institutions can indeed guide students toward successful careers and develop entrepreneurial growth through their understanding and response to individual and contextual elements which shape these perceptions. Indeed, the literature demonstrated that comprehensive education strategies that link employability training with entrepreneurial instruction help students navigate the modern labour market challenges.

9. Implications of the Findings

The implications of the findings of this study are significant for various stakeholders, including educational institutions, policymakers, and students. The study highlights the students' perceptions of employability and entrepreneurial intentions among university students. Institutions should prioritise the development of employability and entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to better prepare graduates for the dynamic demands of the workforce. Secondly, Policymakers could use these findings to develop strategies which promote entrepreneurship and economic development. The allocation of resources for entrepreneurship education and academic-industry partnerships and policy implementation for start-up and small business facilitation should be considered by policymakers. Furthermore, regarding policy makers, fostering curriculum systems to incorporate entrepreneurship education—while also stressing employability skills—is vital for nurturing a generation of capable, self-reliant graduates [54]. There is a critical necessity for strategic policies that promote upward integration of employability tools and entrepreneurship education. Additionally, this study demonstrates that students should actively pursue opportunities which develop both their employability and entrepreneurial abilities. The combination of self-assessment for employability skills and entrepreneurial thinking should enable students to access various career paths that include operating their own business. Students should also join internships, business competitions, entrepreneurship clubs and mentorship programmes to develop practical skills and establish professional connections. Students who take advantage of these opportunities should be able to develop the necessary resilience and adaptability to succeed in today's unpredictable job market.

10. Conclusion

This study offered a detailed review of student views about employability together with their entrepreneurial goals. Research data shows university students understand employability skills matter for career success, yet they want to pursue entrepreneurial goals that allow them to innovate freely and have control over their decisions. The development of students' views about their future career paths heavily depends on three main elements: institutional backing, hands-on learning opportunities and professional guidance. It is evident that Higher education institutions should develop curriculums that simultaneously strengthen employability and entrepreneurial skills. This can be achieved by:

i). Educational institutions unifying business education and authentic business experiences between academic study periods and commercial collaborations and business incubators. Hands-on business education combined with practical entrepreneurial training will build both employment preparedness and entrepreneurial competencies for students.

ii). Introducing cross-disciplinary programmes that merge business education with technological knowledge and innovation concepts. This will offer comprehensive training that suits both traditional business organization roles and start-up business ventures.

iii). Embracing technological advancements and web-based initiatives for teaching entrepreneurship abilities and developing employability competencies. In this regard the use virtual workshops combined with online mentoring activities, and digital portfolio development tools could be used to deliver resources to students across different locations.

There is however need for more research, on the subject. It is envisaged that Long-term research would reveal how students' views about their employment prospects and entrepreneurial dreams transform throughout their academic years. Research on how academic institutions implement practical entrepreneurial experiences in their curricula is bound to uncover effective teaching methods and creative approaches. Finally, there is also need for more investigation into technology and online platforms that boost employability. Knowledge about how digital tools develop an environment that improves learning and skills development needs to be understood for adapting to rapid changes in the labour market.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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